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# THE PATHWAY TO PERFECTION

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# THE PATHWAY TO PERFECTION

## A TREATISE ON THE PATH OF SWIFT UNFOLDMENT

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BY

GEOFFREY HODSON

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# PREFACE

THIS book is a successor to my former work, *Meditations on the Occult Life*. Both were written in the meditative state which can follow the practice of contemplation. The mind can then be receptive, whether from without or from within, to a commentary upon subjects with which it has been occupied.

In Hindu logic there are three modes of obtaining knowledge. One is called *Pratyakṣa* (in *Sanskrit*), meaning actually seeing. The second is called *Anumāna*, meaning inference or deduction. The third is called *Śruti*, meaning that which is heard. The products of *Śruti* are referred to as *Āptavākya*, meaning words of people who can be trusted.

The contents of this second book in the series, like those of the first, whilst imperfectly conveyed, could be classified as *Śruti*.

They are offered not as my own production, not as *Pratyakṣa* or *Anumāna*, but as *Śruti*.

GEOFFREY HODSON

Adyar, Madras, India.
1954

# INTRODUCTION

MAN as man is a bundle of weaknesses, a concatenation of disabilities. Superhuman man is compact of strength and beyond all human limitations. The difference between them is well-nigh incalculable by man, who, nevertheless, contains within himself the germ of Superhumanity.

The change from man to Superman, if it is to be accomplished with abnormal speed, demands the utmost effort. Man possesses the power swiftly to make the change, but success will remain beyond his reach as long as he is only half-hearted in his endeavour.

The heights are so colossal and the strain so severe, that success only becomes possible when the whole being is dedicated without reserve to the great Quest. The aspirant must evoke all the powers of the Soul and direct them with uttermost sincerity and will to the sublime objective; for then alone can man quickly achieve Superhumanity.

Insincerity is amongst the greatest of all hindrances on the Occult Path. Insincerity corrodes the integrity of the Soul, destroys the new growth as rapidly as it is made and mars the beauty of the opening bud, of which as canker it eats away the heart. Insincerity also bars the passage of pure reason as it seeks to illumine the brain.

Half-heartedness renders occult development impossible; for only with his whole Soul, with every part of his nature, and with all his will applied to the great endeavour, may the aspirant attain the heights in advance of the normal time.

Supermen exist. They once were men. Ages ago they awoke to the Quest, felt the stirring of Monadic[1] fire and, gradually gathering strength, they embarked upon the steep, strait, narrow Way which they knew would take them to their goal. Steadfastly enduring, rarely yielding, in growing self-mastery they ascended the heights and reached the goal.

The existence and the attainment of Supermen are the assurance to every man that the goal exists and is attainable. Let none doubt, therefore. Let there be neither misgiving nor questioning concerning this supreme endeavour. Success is utterly assured for all who steadfastly endure to the triumph of the end.

---

[1] *Monad.* The Divine Spark in man, the Dweller in the Innermost, the "Immortal Germ".

Reward beyond all telling is theirs who have attained. Themselves beyond the possibility of pain, they are able to heal the pain of humanity. Themselves beyond all strife, they are able to bring peace to the hearts of men. Illumined, they become light-bringers to mankind and teachers to those who have ears to hear. Safe for ever, they save mankind. Keepers of the Sacred Light of Truth, they illumine with Truth itself the questing minds of men. Their hearts ever open to all joy and all sorrow of man, they are the refuge of the wounded heart and of the sore afraid.

Naught vanquishes them who themselves are vanquishers. Nothing daunts them who themselves have conquered all enemies within and without, have passed over every obstacle and ascended every height. Knowing the very worst, having fought and overcome the direst evils that can possibly beset mankind, having beaten off all that assails the questing Soul, serene in their knowledge of omnipotence concerning their own lives, they are the sure shields and the unfailing supports of all who seek their aid. To have become all this is their great reward. Similarly to become is the sure reward of all who successfully tread the Way of Holiness,[1] the Pathway to Perfection.

They would say to those who would follow them to the heights on which they stand:

"Arise all you who would attain. Send up your cry for light and enter fearlessly upon the upward Way. It is for you. It calls you. It is your destiny to succeed. Aid awaits you. Your Teacher is near you, watching you. Look not back but forward and you will see His face. Earth's Supermen wait upon earth's men, ready to assist each one who answers to the call and with sincerity and whole-heartedness gives himself entirely to the Quest of light and power and truth, aspiring ardently to become a servant and a saviour of the world.

"Is worldly life still so attractive that it binds you to the world? Is earthly light so beautiful that it blinds you to heavenly beauty? Are you so wedded to the world that severance therefrom is as yet impossible? If so, then your time has not yet come. But if all fails around you, and life seems a hollow mockery and worldly gain and power a sham, then your time has come. Arise and seek that which alone endures and is real—the spiritual life with its crown of spiritual power, and a serene bliss that nothing in existence can evermore disturb.

---

[1] *Isaiah* XXXV: 8, 9 and 10.

"Not lightly, but with deep sincerity, let your resolve be made. Balance for yourself the two alternatives and make your choice between the worldly life, with its fleeting joys and temporary gains, and the spiritual life with its evrelasting bliss and peace. That choice, between impotence to meet your own and other's need and omnipotence to conquer self and lead others to like victory, should not be difficult. Make it and come to join the ranks of those whose choice was made long ago, and who steadfastly persisted until the end in triumph over self and mergence with the One Self of All."

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## CHAPTER I

# THE SECRET LEAVEN

A SECRET leaven, unconsciously to mankind, is ceaselessly at work within every man. A fiery power from the Monad plays continuously into and through the Ego.[1] Whether the personality[2] is immediately influenced or not, the leavening process is continuous, despite commission of even the grossest crimes.

Duality and divergence of nature and mode of existence between the immortal and the mortal parts of man are most marked in unawakened man. The Ego lives its own, largely inner, life in its own world, concerned at that state of evolution with the gestatory processes occurring within it. Will, wisdom and intelligence are all present germinally from the moment of individualisation.[3] Very slowly, in terms of earth time, these three powers change from the germinal to the embryonic state. Enfired from within by the Monad, stimulated from without by the activity of the lower mind, intelligence gradually develops through hundreds of lives. Wisdom and intuition follow, and ultimately the true will of man assumes direction of his whole existence.

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[1] Ego, the Spiritual Soul, the immortal Self, the reincarnating principle in man.

[2] Personality, the mortal man.

[3] Individualisation, the attainment of self-conscious Egoity at entry into the human kingdom.

These three, intellect, intuition and will, are not separate from one another. Intelligence cannot exist or function without wisdom and will, however slight their expression. Wisdom demands intelligence as vehicle and will as driving force, whilst will is dependent upon both intelligence and wisdom for manifestation below its own natural level. Nevertheless, the germination, unfoldment and ultimate perfecting of each attribute takes place in succession, though all ceaselessly interact.

According to its nature, the experiences of a given human life may either retard or hasten these processes. Intensive activity evoked by special opportunities quickens Egoic development. A quiet, rural life leaves the Ego but little affected. An indulgent life offers no aid, save that the effects are educative. A criminal life similarly educates, but its adverse *karma* [1] may bring conditions for several lives which so hamper personal activity that the Ego gains little or nothing from them. Excessive criminality places such a *karmic* drag upon succeeding incarnations that all direct profit from them in terms of Egoic expansion can be lost.

Even under such conditions the interior Egoic unfoldment continues. Nothing can prevent that when once the Monad has found individual vehicles of will, wisdom and intelligence, for the Monad is pressure to moreness. It is fiery, spiritual power imbued with intelligence, irresistibly impelled to expand. Before attachment to and evolution through individual vehicles, it is universal in character. Its rays extend on every side equally and indifferently like those of its prototype, the sun. For long ages, through the elemental, mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, it has been unaware of self-expression. It has existed and moved to moreness, but unfocussed and non-directionally. At individualisation its beams become parallel, and shine downwards into the sub-Monadic planes along a predetermined path which passes through the new-formed Ego and into a single physical body, when in incarnation.

---

[1] *Karma, Sanskrit.* The law of cause and effect and the results of its operation.

The Monadic rays, which resemble currents of intelligence-imbued electric fire, constitute the leavening agency, ever active as spiritual "yeast" within the Ego of man. Even surrender to evil and the powers of evil cannot quench this Monadic fire. Nothing can thwart it, though deliberate choice of evil can retard the process of self-perfecting upon which, as Ego, it is perpetually engaged.

Lost personalities may tear away so large a portion of the higher intellect that the process of individualisation must be repeated, but as soon as that is achieved the leavening power of the Monadic fire at once resumes its activity. Thus, no Spiritual Soul is ever lost, no Monad can ever fail, however deep the degradation of the personality. Victory by Spirit over matter is utterly assured; for the leavening power of Spirit is both infinite and irresistible, whilst the resistance and restriction characteristic of matter are finite and conquerable.

The Monad, who is Arjuna,[1] inevitably conquers the Kauravas, who symbolise the material vehicles of the Ego-personality, whilst Shri Krishna is the Logos—Synthesis and Source of all Monads. The deeper the depths into which the Ego-personality falls, the slower the process of self-perfecting. In the worlds of time, time is lost and suffering is endured, but victory is in no way rendered unsure. Men like Hitler delay, but cannot frustrate, the fulfilment of the will to moreness inherent in the Great Breath, and therefore inherent in all Monadic " Breaths of the Great Breath ".

The whole of humanity is in varying degrees involved in both the triumphs and the defeats of individuals. All Monads are formed of the One Spiritual Fire, are Breaths of the One Breath, are components of the composite Monad which is the Logos.[2] At the Monadic level, therefore, all intimately share in all activities, all fruits, all attainments and all delays. At the Egoic level this sharing is somewhat reduced, because separate individuality has temporarily divided off the One Divine Monadic

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[1] *Vide The Bhagavad Gita*, translated by A. Besant.

[2] *Logos, Greek.* The Word. The Creative Power, Wisdom, Intelligence and " Voice " by which all things are formed. *Cf.*, *John* I: 1-5.

Fire and Life into largely self-acting compartments. At the personal, physical level the sharing is reduced to a minimum, for there individuality is made still more distinct by diverse and extremely individual experience and *karma*, and by the bodily separateness of one person from another. Only at the Monadic level, therefore, can full unity be affirmed. Only in the white light are all coloured rays wholly at one.

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### CHAPTER II

## IN THE HALL OF SILENCE

The steps upon the Way of Holiness lead towards the Hall of Silence, wherein the first regular step upon the Path is taken. It is no outer Hall, nor is it the silence of this world. The Hall is figurative and the silence an interior equipoise. A state of consciousness is entered in which all vibrations from the lower mind are stilled and all attention withdrawn from the outer world. He gazes wholly inwards who would proceed towards the place of light, and hear the creative Word within him which will call into existence a veritable new creation.

The neophyte must be ceaselessly on guard against the intrusion of selfish, desire-ful thoughts and feelings. These ensoil the whole nature, render impure the heart, and so are anathema. The temptation in the wilderness is that of selfishness, and the tempter is the remnant of egoism still unextirpated from the Soul.

Only in stillness can the Monad descend; therefore the neophyte must learn to be still. In silence alone can the Logos of the Soul speak the creative

Word. The silence before the dawn of Creation must be consciously reproduced in the mind and the heart of the neophyte. Then may the interior Logos manifest creatively as that occult sound which produces order out of chaos, form from formlessness, and causes a new man to be born.

Amid the silence the aspirant hears a Voice which speaks to him, saying:

"Empty the mind of all preconceptions and let the light shine in. Empty the heart of all desire and let pure love shine through. Empty the Soul of all personal ambition and let the fire of aspiration exalt thee. Empty thy whole being of self and selfishness that selflessness may become thine inmost quality. Then illumination can occur, then progress can be made, then mastery of the lower self by the higher can be attained.

"Practice, therefore, self-emptying. Denude thyself of self. Become no-thing that a new thing may arise from deep within thee. No faintest tinge of self-desire must taint the white purity of thy Soul. No tremor from the desire-ful world below must break the silence of thy mind. The whole self must be held still in expectancy, as one awaiting the first light of dawn, the first footfalls of an approaching friend."

Thus robed in purity, thus rooted in stillness, thus poised expectantly, the Soul of man receives its inward light, hears its inmost voice, and by light and sound becomes newborn. A new life then begins, illumined increasingly by an inward light and directed by an inward voice.

The Soul's gaze is now drawn increasingly towards the innermost, the Holy of Holies containing the Soul's Sanctuary and Shrine, abode of the true Father in Heaven, where a new son is to be born of that Father's Light and Voice.

In the Soul's new spiritual infancy, the Master[1] guards and guides. In spiritual puberty, Monadic light and power begin to illumine and direct from within the ever-watching and ever-listening Soul. In adolescence, strength and stability are gained. In spiritual manhood, the adult life is lived. As Master he appears before the world, in his turn seeking new candidates. Maturity brings added power and the Office of Hierophant. The Soul need no more gaze upon the inward light, for he has become that light. He is the voice that hitherto, as from beyond, has illumined and directed him. Himself the light, he sheds that light in fiery beams into the Souls of other men, enlightening and awakening them. Himself a voice, he now instructs and directs his fellow men.

Ultimately he who long ago was newborn dies to the world and planet which was his human home, and ascends to a state of worldlessness where only pure light and perfect harmony exist. Therein he disappears from mortal view, merged in the Universal Soul, from which shone forth the Light and

[1] *Master*. An Adept, or perfected man, Who takes pupils.

sounded forth the Voice by which all things were made. Thereafter, eternal silence reigns for him. Rooted in stillness, he is then immovable by aught outside himself. He is as a pillar in the Temple of the Universe. He has found and trodden the pathway to perfection.

## CHAPTER III

# THE ONE WILL

The occult life is one in which the hitherto hidden powers of man are studied, awakened, developed and mastered. These powers are the heritage of every human being, are, in fact, the very substance of the Soul. Basically, there is but one parent Power in both Universe and man. It is the power of Will, the irresistible thrust of pure Spirit driving Life downwards and outwards from the Source and Centre to the field and the circumference.

The One Force is quite impersonal, though not blind. It is an energy imbued with intelligence, a power self-directed according to Law. It is the *Atman* of the Hindu metaphysician and the Will of the Western philosopher. It is the basis of existence, the foundation force of the Universe and the power in man which makes for righteousness, which means for evolution. It is omnipresent and omniscient, but does not reach omnipotence until the end of the evolutionary Age. This force arises from deep within the womb of Nature, which is the virginal, formless sea of boundless Space. It is the first product of the union of Universal Spirit and Universal Space. It is the Son by whom all things were—and are—made.

The "first born of many brethren" is endowed with consciousness, knows the purpose for which it has been made. Its goal is fullness, its inherent impulse to expand. Meeting the resistance of matter, conflict at once begins, the ever-lasting Armageddon by means of which fullness is attained and ordered expansion achieved.

Infinite and inexhaustible, the One Will seizes upon the substance of Universal Space with ever-growing power and ever deeper penetration. Behind is the irresistible thrust, based on and derived from Absolute Power and awakened Will to expand. Substance yields, as it ever must, and at last the deepest depths, the limits of the evolutionary field, are reached. In this Universe these limits are the four elements[1] of the physical world from which all Nature is formed.

Life then follows in the wake of Will and moulds the impregnated substance into forms. Forms in their turn yield to Life, as substance yielded to Will. Beauty dawns as a sunlight shed upon the world. Sensitivity within the forms increases in response to pressure towards fullness from within and to impacts from without. Sensitivity breeds instinct in plant and animal, self-consciousness in man.

---

[1] *Elements.* The subtile, unmixed essences of earth, water, air and fire and the objective substances produced by their varied combinations.

The lion becomes the sphinx, man-headed and eagle-winged. The sphinx's age-along wait is ended in due time. Upright then, its eagle wings are spread. It mounts on high to realms of abstract thought. The human head predominates, the animal form is out-grown. Man stands erect, an individual, a microcosm in which Will and Life are conjoined in full self-consciousness, as earlier they were joined at the forming of the Universe.

Self-willed, self-vitalised, self-directed, man is a free being in a Universe ruled only by Law. At first, freedom is grievously misused. The outraged Law, itself not without consciousness and conscious representatives, makes manifest its unchangeable decrees. Pain comes to teach the way of righteousness and make of man a law-abiding citizen of the Universe.

The thrust of fullness must be self-controlled, the Will to moreness must not impede the expansion of any other citizen; for that is Universal Law. Man learns, obeys, finds fuller freedom in obedience, and at last becomes the Law. Then is he really man, threefold, built of Will and Life and Law, the ever-blessed Trinity.

He then begins self-consciously and deliberately to study, develop and control these threefold powers within himself. He now seeks through Will mastery of Life and Law, and so he studies Occultism,[1] takes up the occult life, finds and treads the occult Way. He turns inwards towards his inmost Will-Self, which is the Universal Atman centred in him as a fiery spark, component of the Universal Flame. He seeks that Will which is for him the only reality, the parent of all else in him and the essential man. For all seekers and all occultists this is the great Quest of all the ages. Its fulfilment in Self-discovery crowns the occult life. Thereafter, the One Power of the Universe becomes increasingly his tool. Applied by intellect to the lower man it empowers, and at the same time purifies and beautifies, the outer self and life.

Will grows in power, substance loses hold. Intellect, the linking third, grows in knowledge, force and mastery. That which so long has been occult becomes overt, and a new life is lived. This inner life concerns the formless attributes of Nature and of man, the abstract mind and wisdom-love from which spiritual perception comes. Finally the Will undergoes deliberate development. The Higher Self, yielding to the Atman, expands and is empowered and also beautified.

The Macrocosm now becomes the field. Universal Light shines down into the awakened Self, responsive to its power. At last the great blending occurs in which the microcosm temporarily disappears to rebecome, with full self-consciousness and memory, the Macrocosm. There is duality no more; the two are one. This is the goal for man—to perfect the part and then surrender it to the whole. This, in outline and in essence, is the occult life, this its purpose and its goal.

---

[1] *Occultism.* The science of the hidden, Divine Life in Nature and in man.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE LAWS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

THE practice of the spiritual life consists of a systematic subordination of thought, feeling and action to the necessities of spiritual unfoldment. Rules exist, but they are those of natural law applied to the end of hastened attainment. The impulse to unfoldment and attainment is inherent and active throughout all Nature. It is the result of the irresistible and continuous pressure of Spirit, encased in matter, towards expansion and fullness. Spiritually awakened man is aware of this impulse within him. Aspirants to Superhumanity consciously co-operate with this interior power, deliberately submit themselves to it and apply it in concentrated form to the conduct of their lives.

The laws of the spiritual life are Nature's laws applied to man seeking swift ascent to Superhumanity. In essence they are simple and not very numerous. One law underlies them all. It is that entry upon each new phase of growth is accompanied and made possible by a renunciation, or figurative death, of the protection afforded to life during the preceding phase. The husk must die before a grain grows into a plant. The eggshell must break before the chick can emerge. So also with man, whose shell is self-centredness and accentuated individuality. These two qualities must be removed and displaced by the characteristics of the new phase, which are selflessness and I-less-ness.

The first rule of the spiritual life, therefore, is that self must die, selfishness must be outgrown and accentuated Egohood must be abandoned. From these broken and discarded shells or husks a new man emerges, who is Ego-less and increasingly unified with the all-pervading Life. This change will occur naturally as racial evolution proceeds, but the aspirant to Superhumanity deliberately forces it upon himself, hastens a natural process by the intensive application of mind and Will to that end. Nothing unnatural is attempted. Nothing abnormal occurs, save the speed at which the natural process is completed.

This is the governing principle of the spiritual life—that Nature's laws are deliberately applied to himself by the aspirant, to the end of quickened evolution out of the human into the Superhuman Kingdom. This demands constant self-recollection, in which the new purpose for living is kept continually in the forefront of the mind until it influences every thought and deed. The would-be occultist thus becomes the embodiment of a single idea, which is that of hastened unfoldment attained by means of constantly applied interior pressure.

Needless to say, this pressure must be applied scientifically, regularly and consistently, for that is Nature's way. Though she may rest seasonally, the pressure to growth is never wholly withdrawn. So, also, the man who seeks the stature and powers of the Superman maintains a continuous pressure in the direction of that ideal and that goal.

As Nature has her seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter in which the degree of pressure of growth varies, so man orders his day and his life. In accordance with the method of Her who is his ever-present and ever-followed guide, he employs the hours of his day and the periods of his life in a manner conducive to the end in view. Morning is his spring, as high noon is his summer, evening his autumn and night his winter time.

Each morning pressure in the direction of Egoless-ness is applied, that the shell may be weakened and eventually broken. Each forenoon study occupies the mind, that the principles of both natural and hastened growth may be more fully grasped. At high noon the intensest pressure is applied in contemplation of THAT which is the One in all and all in One. The remainder of the day is devoted to living out in constant watchfulness the ideals of the occult life.

The world, his fellowmen, failure and success, and the increasing action of causative law, become his teachers. Detached from them, even whilst in their midst, he learns from them. His own successes and mistakes chiefly illumine him, as he seeks and finds the principles which govern and produce them both. These basic principles and natural laws are the objects of his study, and their continuous application to himself is his supreme preoccupation.

Herein is encountered and must be solved the first of many paradoxes of the higher life. Whilst seeking selflessness, he must increasingly observe himself. Self-watchfulness rather than introspection is the ideal, whilst throughout the sublime motive must never be forgotten. To become consciously unified with the One Life throughout the Cosmos, to offer that Life the most perfect, fullest, freest expression, and to help that Life to fullness and freedom in other forms which imprison and even torture it—these are the purposes of the great endeavour. Service is the keynote of the Quest, and the Superman is above all one who serves.

The purpose for self-watchfulness and self-development is not that of selfish gain. On the contrary, it is to disappear as separated self and to aid all other men to that attainment. Thus is solved in thought, motive and action the seeming paradox of selflessness and self-watchfulness. Since the ideal is self-deliverance from the prison of self-individuality, the state of oneness with the Life in all is continually envisaged.

Thought is the husbandman which brings to ripeness the seed of Adeptship in man, thought also the instrument employed. The mind is both the source of limitation and the means of release—a second paradox; for the mind of man is the seat of his Egohood and therefore, as agent of separateness, must "die". In another aspect the mind is the seat of that power by which unity is first recognised, and later realised. Therefore the mind, as agent for union with the whole, must live and grow and come to full fruition.

The mind is also the instrument by which the pressure to hastened fulfilment is applied. The early morning of each day is, therefore, devoted to the use and culture of the mind. Withdrawn in privacy, the body in complete repose, the spine erect, the attention is focussed first upon the Higher Self within the abstract aspect of the mind.

At first that Higher Self is visualised in form acceptable to the temperament of the seer. It may truthfully be conceived as light focussed in an area, extended far beyond the physical body. At its heart is the Light-Source shining with an intenser glow at this centre, consciousness exists, and the whole radiant sphere is endowed with intellect, is intellect in essence manifest as light of many hues. Attention is continually directed into this sphere, which is the vehicle of the Divine Consciousness in man, so that gradually and by persistent effort the centre of human awareness becomes transferred from the brain into the Higher Self. The barriers between them consist of the physical tissue of brain and skull, and the etheric, emotional and mental substances of which those several principles of man are built. These barriers are penetrated by daily effort to elevate the consciousness through, beyond and above brain, feeling and thought into awareness within the Higher, Immortal Self.

A way exists along which consciousness can thus move. It is the bridge down which consciousness passed on its incarnating path during prenatal life. This path partly closes after birth, as does completely the anterior fontanel which is its physical entrance from below. By daily meditation upon the Higher Self, to the end of self-realisation therein, that path may be reopened and the opening power is thought. Therefore day by day, and preferably several times a day, the power of thought is applied to this channel that it may be opened by sheer force of thought and Will. At the same time, from above, the Inner Self, source of the impulse to attempt the Quest, directs its power and light through mind and emotion into the brain. Thus from below and from above the two centres of human awareness, the physical and the higher mental, gradually approach each other, drawn together by aspiring thought and awakened Will to self-illumination and self-mastery.

Affirmations made in power assist the mind and the Will to maintain the concentrated thought and determined pressure essential to achievement.

Examples are:

> "I am Divine, Immortal and Eternal. I affirm and realise my divinity, my immortality and my eternity.

> Divine is the Self. I am the Divine Self, that Self am I.
>
> Immortal is the Self. I am the Immortal Self, that Self am I.
>
> Eternal is the Self. I am the Eternal Self, that Self am I.
>
> The Self in me is one with the Self in all. I am that Self, that Self am I."

Such phrases as these, mentally affirmed with increasing depth and fullness of realisation, serve to exalt the consciousness. Oft-repeated, continually affirmed with concentrated thought and Will, they will most surely take man across the Bridge of the Immortals, which is no outer bridge but shines within himself.

Beyond the reincarnating Higher Self, deep within the Centre and the Source of light, is THAT from which Centre and Source proceed. It is the spark of the One Flame, the true centre of individuality and existence in man, the Monadic Self. The Monad is to the Higher Self what that Self is to the physical, mortal man. The aspirant must therefore pass onwards, beyond and above the reincarnating principle of Egohood to the root identity of man, which is indeed a point of fire, a spark of Deific Flame.

To reach this highest, deepest Self, the veritable Self of the microcosmic man, intenser effort must be employed. With the Higher Self partially realised and realisation deepening with daily practice, consciousness essays a far greater flight, a far more momentous transference. To this end the whole being must be offered up in ardent sacrifice, to become a surrendered vehicle of the Monadic Self. Day by day, and even hour by hour, the Monad is deliberately invoked into the Higher Self, and through that into the life of the mortal man.

Fire is now the image used, as was light in the stage before. The Monad is a being of fire. It is a concentration of the Divine Will into one spark-like embodiment. The Monad is an incarnation of the omnipotent Will of Spirit, of the Fire from which the Universe was built, within which it was conceived and by which it is sustained.

The realm of occult fire, the region of spiritual flame, is now entered as Monadic self-awareness is achieved. Deific powers then are tapped. Will-force in a fiery, irresistible stream pours down into and through the Higher Self, to reach and mightily empower the mortal man on earth.

Thus, metaphorically in a chariot of fire, the Monad descends in consciousness from highest heaven to earth. Thus, thereafter, man ascends in that same chariot of fire, Elijah-like, to the highest state of spiritual consciousness. The personal and the Egoic Selves are reabsorbed into that Monadic Centre of Divine Fire and Intelligence from which they long ago emerged.

As the ascent is achieved, exploration of the regions entered is carried out. Deepening realisation of state after state of exalted and expanded consciousness is attained by the daily practice of self-illumination, self-exaltation and self-empowerment. Wholly to succeed, practice in thought must be accompanied meticulously by practice in deed. The way of life must increasingly and continuously express both the ardent aspiration of the inner man and the fruits of the success attained. Practice in action must accompany practice in thought. If this be not so, man becomes guilty of the great occult "sin" of hypocrisy.

Steadily, therefore, and despite many falls, the daily, hourly life of the aspirant becomes more spiritual, more idealistic, more considerate and more humane. This continues until a veritable transformation has occurred, a process which culminates in a transfiguration of the mortal man into the full likeness of the Immortal Shining Self, the Self of Light. Eventually that Light-Self in its turn is transformed into the likeness of the Self of Fire, and then it is that man becomes a Superman.

## CHAPTER V

# DISCIPLESHIP

THE life experiences of every human being constitute an apprenticeship in the workshop of Nature. Each effort, every achievement, each failure, every defeat, all happiness and all pain play their essential parts in training the apprentice for his or her appointed role. That role is foreordained and foreknown by the Master Craftsmen who have every human Ego in Their charge. The future role is the guiding principle in all the training which the Master Trainer gives. Preparation for that foreseen role is the task to which every Ego is turned and is guided, and for which every Ego is trained.

Large numbers of unawakened Egos are in the charge of their Teachers, as sheep are in charge of their shepherds. Every member of the group is known individually, is watched, guarded and tended with consummate skill and compassionate concern. Certain Adept Officials in the Inner Government of the World assume this task of guardianship of groups of human beings. In the Hierarchy of the Adepts, each Adept Head of one of the Seven Rays[1] receives responsibility for a numbered group of Souls.

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[1] *Vide The Seven Human Temperaments*, Geoffrey Hodson, T.P.H., Adyar.

The whole human Race upon the globe, every Monad-Ego on the planet, is in the direct charge and care of the Supreme Head of the Adept Hierarchy on Earth, the Lord of the World. Under Him, according to rank, His Adept Assistants undertake the direction of groups of decreasing numbers according to Their capacity. No-one is ever outside this compassionate care and love. No-one is for a moment outside the consciousness of the Adepts, and even the most recalcitrant and rebellious person is held safe within that care. No wickedness or waywardness of personalities, no prideful egoism of exalted minds, causes any withdrawal of guidance or any cessation of the continuous shepherding care of which all men are the recipients.

Whole nations of millions of Egos are in the charge of Adept Officiants appointed to those nations. Groups within nations karmically united from past, and even future, lives have their attendant Watchers. Individuals are not lost in this vast shepherding of millions by one Adept. His consciousness is deliberately exended to include them all. His life flows into and through them all. His will vivifies and spiritually stimulates them all. Centuries are as nought in this great process of Egoic ministration. Life follows life for each individual, but no-one is lost sight of for a moment. The choices of sex, caste, colour and environment that are made at each reincarnation are the product of careful consultations with Adept and Archangelic Authorities.

The Karmic[1] Lords also have Their own Representatives on earth, on each continent and within each nation. *Karma* is carefully weighed before, and also after, each new birth. The best that can be provided is invariably and infallibly arranged. Adversities are mitigated as far as may be. Every beneficial act is made the most of and used to soften suffering inseparable from maleficence. When deep suffering is inevitable, special watch is kept to see that no overweight is placed upon the individual and that the strain and the pain do not exceed *karma's* just decree, and the Ego's power educatively to endure.

When, as a result of this guidance and experience and of Nature's gradually applied pressure, an Ego is seen at last to be spiritually awakening, then that Ego's future mission enters increasingly into the Adept's calculations. Past, present and future become a unity, a totality of *karma* and *dharma*[2] to be taken into account. Training becomes more individual and more precise thereafter. The Ego concerned, to a greater extent admitted to consultation, makes choices and increasingly co-operates in their ratification.

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[1] *Vide Reincarnation: Fact or Fallacy*? Geoffrey Hodson, T.P.H., Adyar.

[2] *Dharma, Sanskrit*. Duty. The right fulfilment of life.

Filled more and more with the will to attain, conscious of growing pressure from within, the awakened Ego demands a rapid settling of *karmic* debts, reckless at times of the danger to the personality, which as a result becomes the crucible of a fiery transmutation. Then the Adept guides and warns. Then the *Karmic* Lords make choice. To the highest ends, and by the wisest means, They direct the selection of nation and parentage and the degree of adversity which shall be endured. The Ego is followed down, as it were, into rebirth and special guardianship is maintained.

When, after many lives and much success, strength and stability have been developed, idealism adopted and appetites subdued, the Adept Teacher of that Soul appears to him. At first unknown and unseen, the Master-to-be inspires and directs his inner life and moulds somewhat his outer circumstances, all to the ends of spiritual progress, opportunity to serve and closer contact with Himself.

Then at last the aspirant enters on that life in which the Way of Holiness[1] will be definitely found and deliberately trodden. His Master watches him, appears to him in dreams, stimulates his Egoic and personal development, awakens nascent faculties, and draws him into contact with his seniors on the upward Way who can lead him to discipleship.

[1] *Isaiah*, XXXV: 8, 9 & 10.

As far as the Ego is concerned, discipleship itself is always a conscious experience. Whilst the body sleeps the Ego, fully awakened and self-knowing, meets the Master face to face, generally at His abode. The question is then put by the Master to the aspirant whether he desires to enter upon the Path under that Adept's direction, and to be trained by Him. Full clarity of vision is ensured to the individual on that momentous occasion. Full freedom of decision is allowed to him. The opportunities, the necessities, the ordeals and the trials are all fully explained. He is free to refuse, to ask for delay, or to embrace at once the tremendous opportunity.

Discipleship constitutes for man entry upon a phase of unfoldment analogous to the formation of the bud in a plant. For both man and plant, promise of a new and revolutionary form of self-manifestation then arises. For man, the way of life entered upon is the way of selflessness, self-giving and self-surrender, which will culminate in the full flower of a perfect life. The perfection of man, his efflorescence, implies both full self-develoment and the full release in power, beauty and spiritual fragrance of all that has been attained.

Discipleship of an Adept is the rarest privilege and greatest opportunity to which pre-Initiate man can attain; for then a human being becomes intimately associated with a Superhuman Being, a man with a Superman. The Occult Path of hastened evolution out of humanity into Superhumanity is entered upon. A bridge between the two stages and kingdoms has been constructed by an Adept for an individual human being. The disciple is established by his Master upon that bridge, is shown how to march across, is strengthened, directed, and attracted to the other side.

The vision of the Master, and the knowledge that He has been found and that He supremely cares for the disciple and watches over him, in themselves constitute tremendous incentives. Never more is the disciple alone, never outside a great and paternal love. His Soul is cherished by his Master. He knows that fact and is empowered and exalted by his knowledge. The Master's own attainment is a sign to him that he, too, can similarly attain.

The Master's power and wisdom evoke his highest reverence and love. The Master's gracious friendliness encourages and inspires him. Signs are granted that the Master watches over the disciple. Visions by night and by day demonstrate the Master's love and watchful care. Agentship and channelship, the occasional rush of power and healing force, all prove physically to the disciple the reality of the superphysical and spiritual relationship. A benediction rests upon him and, with increasing frequency, that blessing is bestowed on those in his environment. His power of comprehension deepens. His intellectual capacities increase. He studies with new fruitfulness, both brain and mind displaying unexpected faculties. Thus the disciple grows most rapidly in the sunshine of the Master's power, love and constant use of him to help the world.

The disciple's outer life is not without sorrow, strain and intensest effort, however full of light the life within. Bodily discipline, selfless motivation in all things and a deep and true humility, despite the sense of growing power and privilege, must now characterise his life. Subtle barriers and temptations confront and assail him, all arising from a long established and habitual selfishness. The old Adam does not die easily and quickly. Humiliations and defeats mark his new life, especially at its beginning.

Will is then the factor that brings him through and keeps him pressing on. At his first fully conscious conference with the Adept Teacher, and later at his acceptance as disciple by his Master, the Will to full attainment is awakened and brought down into the personality. The Monadic fire now mingles with the Egoic light. Under the Master's directing power both play down into the mind and ultimately, as burning Will to mastery, reach the waking consciousness. This fiery, inner Will arouses and empowers the disciple without surcease. He learns to draw upon his own spiritual power, to rest upon its might, and by its aid to burn out and extirpate the undesirable attributes which betray him and bring him to shame.

This is the function of the Adept Master on His disciple's behalf—to help to bridge the gap between the Monad and the man on earth, to bring down the fire of Monadic Will into the brain, so that the almost superhuman task of swift self-perfecting be not impossible of fulfilment to one who is still but man. By virtue of the awakened inner Will, the disciple continues unyieldingly to ascend, faces the long, steep and often darkened way which leads upwards to heights beyond his view. By Will, the temptations which assail him are eventually resisted and self-indulgence overcome.

The Powers and Beings of Darkness do not fail to note his growing power and to place obstacles in his way. With piercing insight they perceive his weaknesses and deliberately intensify them, even as the Master intensifies all his highest powers. Subtle snares are set for him. Sensual allurements tempt him. Ultimately he must pierce and pass through them all. Though seeming enemies, the Beings of Darkness and their enticements prove useful in his development: they bring out his weaknesses and force their recognition upon him, as also the necessity for their replacement by their opposite powers.

Falls, though bringing shame and sorrow to the neophyte, are never finally decisive; they are always educative and, in due course, the Monadic Will elevates and re-inspires him to press on to full self-mastery. His Master, too, does not fail to encourage and instruct him in the meaning of both defeat and victory.

Thus, largely in secrecy, sometimes in seclusion, the inward Way is found and trodden; thus that inner life is lived which takes a man out of the human into the Superhuman Kingdom of Nature.

## CHAPTER VI

# SEVEN TYPES OF DISCIPLES

ENTRY upon the Path of Discipleship marks the germination of the seed of Adeptship inherent in man. The Master's task is both arduous and onerous, Adept though He be; for He has to work upon materials—the substance and attributes of the disciple's vehicles—as yet largely unprepared, untested and unproven. The real character and inward nature of the disciple are as yet but partially developed and but instinctually expressed. The waywardness and the indeterminacy of man may at any time spiritually impoverish the disciple, may undo, if not ruin, the Master's work. The dominating idea of absolute self-mastery is not yet fully awake in the disciple. The irrevocable Will to attain the highest possible development in the shortest possible time is not yet aroused and active in him. Improvement and awakening occur all too slowly in some cases.

The first fiery impulse resulting from direct contact with a Superman can die away. Illusion can darken and deceive the disciple's mind, and sophists may persuade him of his folly and charge him with insanity. All these tests both draw out the disciple's inward power and display to him unmistakably his weaknesses. His reactions to such experiences are not readily calculable, even by an Adept who is an expert in assessing human character and in occult education. At any time the unpredictability of man may upset all His calculations and ruin all His work. Nevertheless, with consummate skill the Master aids the neophyte, assists directly and visibly at certain times, personally advises and instructs at others, and yet again decides to minister *in absentia* so that the disciple must needs rely upon himself alone.

The temperaments of disciples vary greatly, according to their Ray.[1] First Ray men [2], the men of Will, are headstrong, often uncontrollable, exceptionally self-willed, impulsive, and they tend to extremes. Heedlessness besets them when once an objective is in view. Their heavens crash in consequence, brought down in ruin by their own hands, and they are plunged into despair from which they rise only by the powerful action of the awakening Will. They must become men of power, Lords of Will, with strategy and wisdom added to fiery Will.

Second Ray disciples, the men of wisdom and universal love, can too easily lose heart, especially when crushed by the disasters inseparable from the

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[1] *Vide The Seven Human Temperaments*, Geoffrey Hodson. T. P. H., Adyar.

[2] Men. Members of the human Race, not males alone.

Path. Will to achieve, and the Master's tenderness, restore their faith and set them studying the causes of the experience and the ways of prevention and cure. Thus for them ever deeper wisdom is born. The heart opens again its glowing, golden petals and love shines through once more as roseate light. Purity, stainlessness and steadfastness must be developed by those who one day will be Lords of Wisdom and Love.

The Third Ray aspirants, the men of intellect, can be cold and calculating, knowing not at first the fire of love and zeal which keep the reformer's feet upon the upward way. The habit of the *quid pro quo* is not easily lost, nor self-interest renounced. Strategy and tactics become ends in themselves, with the tempting prize of prestige as the reward. Their Master must be skilled to turn these valued powers to right purposes and evoke the desired selflessness. Such mind-ruled men can become both cold and argumentative, zeal-less and restive under the Master's hand. Their very pride of mental accuracy and reasoning power is a pit into which, all too often, they fall. Light, rather than burning zeal or fiery Will, redeems them, the light of higher reasoning than that which they have hitherto employed. Longer vision and more extended views reveal to them the errors of mind-myopia, however logically founded, and so they advance along their path, becoming men of penetrating vision and Lords of Light.

Fourth Ray disciples, lovers of beauty, suffer much from vagueness of purpose, loss of enthusiasm, the sudden *volte face* and the lapse into inconsequence. Beauty reawakens them as nothing else, but the attributes of other Rays, also awakening in them, must be employed to elevate them spiritually and to maintain them on the heights. The fire of genius more easily reaches them than some other types of men. The Egoic light shines down, inspiring and arousing them into spurts and periods of intense and skilled activity. A great call to artistic effort, an opportunity to undertake a major work of art, an inward pressure to perfect and express their innate genius, or all three combined, serve to raise them to the heights and make them malleable under the Master's hands. Such disciples will one day become men of genius in the Arts and Lords of Beauty.

Fifth Ray man, using the formal ratiocinating mind, employs method, rule and precision in his Quest. So sure must he be that each forward step is soundly based and correctly directed, that he may lose valuable time and become too much involved in the details of the occult life. He is sometimes a plodder, and when awakened rarely either delights his Master with a brilliant success or saddens Him with a deplorable defeat. The qualities of other Rays are needed to enfire the coldly reasoning mind from which all activity tends to spring. Nevertheless, as Higher Mind blends increasingly with lower, and the pursuit of abstract truth is added to the search for concrete facts, Fifth Ray disciples are amongst their Master's most useful and most trustworthy instruments of action in the outer world. Used constantly by Him to this end, examining and classifying each experience, they become specialists and experts in occult science. The mysticism which is more particularly of the mind reveals to them the wider truths and deeper facts of Macrocosm and microcosm, and they experience increasingly the interior unity of the *noumena* of the greater and the lesser worlds. They become men of knowledge and Lords of intellectual and spiritual Light, sharing eventually in the attainments of their brothers of the Third Ray.

Sixth Ray disciples, devotees and enthusiasts, are generally of two distinct types: the contemplative mystic, devotee and quietist; and the reformer burning with ardour, brimming over with zeal, forever yearning to be active in some chosen Cause. Each must receive appropriate aid; each be directed to a wider vision and a more selfless zeal. The mystic suffers from morbidity, the reformer from ill-directed action. The qualities of other Rays must be awakened and employed by both before their diverse methods may bring them to their goal. The Sixth Ray disciple who balances his natural characteristics with those of the Third and Fifth Rays becomes a genius of spiritual insight, and of active service for the fulfilment of great plans. He needs steadfastness to offset the changefulness characteristic of emotion, however exalted, which is the mainspring of his active pursuance of the Path. Fanatical intolerance and narrowness of vision and purpose dog the footsteps and delay the progress of such aspirants. Until they break free of the past, tradition can bind and fetter them. They must conquer ingrained habits, control passionate ardour and, in utter self-surrender, lay themselves at their Master's feet and learn to act thereafter on their Master's rather than on their own command. They then become great saints, with passion sublimated, and Lords of the yoga of Surrender and Self-sacrifice.

Seventh Ray disciples, men of power in ordered activity, suffer much from worldliness. Deep-rooted in their Souls is the tendency to express in full magnificence of outer form, and even pomp and circumstance, that splendour which they conceive to be the highest attribute of the Deity. Occultly awakened by evolutionary progress, directed by their Master and inspired by Him, they perceive increasingly the relative places of spiritual kingliness and earthly royalty. Drawn irresistibly to splendour, magnificence and fullness without limit, perceiving these as attributes of the God in Nature and in man, they seek the princely, knightly life and tread the royal way. *Karma* inevitably trains by limiting them, as they enter upon a path which may only be trodden by Souls steeped in deep humility.

" Accentuate the Life even whilst using the form. Perfect and beautify the form as vehicle for the Life. Simplify the form thus perfected and subordinate it to the exigencies of the Life to be made manifest "; thus Fate and their Masters counsel them. Obedient, they seek the inner life of Nature and the secret powers of man.

Men of the Second and Sixth Rays are spiritual brothers, as also are those of the First and Seventh and the Third and Fifth Rays. Like those of the Fourth Ray, Seventh Ray occultists seek the accurate and beautiful expression through mind and body of that regal power which they perceive in the Deity and know increasingly to be their own highest attribute. Penetrating deeply the occult mysteries, magic becomes their instrument. Occult ceremonial, sacred Rites, intercommunication between Devas[1] and men, the generation, evocation and distribution of spiritual power to the end of victory by light over darkness, by life over form—these concern them as they advance to become kingly men, and Lords of Beauty and of Power.

These several types of men, and blends of types, advance from the human ranks and present themselves to the Adept Hierarchy, seeking and demanding light. None may be refused. By iron law, guidance must be accorded to each of them in their search for that to which they aspire. Masters amongst the Adepts are apportioned to them and for each the great trial begins, to end either in glorious and lasting victory or humiliating, but only temporary, defeat.

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[1] *Devas. Sanskrit.* Shining Ones, Orders of angels. *Vide The Kingdom of he Gods*, Geoffrey Hodson, T. P. H., Adyar.

The divine within mankind is undefeatable, even whilst its human embodiment goes down constantly to defeat. This the Master knows and therefore never lightly lets the pupil go, however recalcitrant he or she may become. Final failure is impossible. Ultimate success is assured. Only the time required to attain is at stake, and to shorten that time Masters take as pupils those sufficiently advanced to desire that privilege to the end of more efficient service and more successful living.

The fact is important to mankind that no one who is ready is ever overlooked, no one who Egoically applies is ever refused. The Adept Brotherhood serves humanity with flawless precision and perfect wisdom.

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## CHAPTER VII

# THE MASTER IS FOUND

OPPORTUNITY is Nature's indication that the human Soul approaches perfection. Opportunity knocks at the door of the house in which the outer man is dwelling, to bring the message that the Self within him is about to flower. Opportunity takes many forms, though in all it is a messenger from the world without to the man within. Opportunity is the one sure sign of readiness for the great Quest.

Until the doors open wide of themselves, full success upon that Quest will be delayed. Closed doors are the sign that work within remains as yet undone, that debts remain unpaid, that needed strength is as yet undeveloped, and that the wisdom thus far gained is insufficient for the pilgrim's need. Therefore let those who seek the Master's feet, yet find the pathway closed, carefully examine every phase of character. Keeping the idea of the Master clearly before them, let them employ themselves in self-development in preparation for the Quest. When the time is ripe doors will open, and One will stand within Who says "Come thou with Me." He is the guide sent specially to lead the Soul along the unaccustomed Way. He is the friend predestined from the past to point the Way.

Then comes the Way itself—at first, perhaps, smooth, pleasant, edged with fragrant flowers and easy for the pilgrim's feet. Far ahead it may be seen leading onwards to distant peaks through waste land and wilderness, where flowers give way to desert sand, the smooth path to rocks and thorns, and wild winds in icy gusts bear down upon the traveller, chilling his very heart. These may seem cruel, but the Soul is tempered by them, the Spirit tried and the strong Will tested. Friends fail, promised substance is withheld, crowds jeer, enemies assail, misfortune dogs the pilgrim on the steepening Way.

The joy of the newly-opened door, the counsel of the ever-present Friend, the Master, the flowered ease and happiness of first discovery—all these give place to arduous toil, steep ascent and growing loneliness. Then must he who would proceed prove stout of heart. Then the value is shown of the waiting years, when strength and character were being developed. He needs them now to keep him wise and steadfast on the Way.

Again the Voice is heard: "Persevere, O Pilgrim. Pass your tests. Let nothing daunt you now; for coming down the mountainside is the One you seek, the Master Who has watched you from afar. Seeing now your victories, acquainted with the fibre of your Soul, He comes to gladden you and aid you on the cruel, razor-edged Path. He knows well that Path, having trodden it to its very end. He is your Teacher fore-ordained, your predestined Guide to supernal heights, bound to you and to His task by kinship of the Spirit and by obedience to the Order to which He belongs, the Brotherhood of Those Who light the Way. Press on towards Him, even if as yet you see Him not. Fix fast your gaze ahead of you, walk warily and carefully, but keep on; for He draws nigh."

At last the great event occurs for which the open doors have proved a sign. The Master Who has long awaited the pilgrim Soul has come to meet him on the upward Way. The disciple-to-be beholds Him face to face, tall, strong, wise, compassionate. Within His eyes he sees full knowledge of every pain that he has endured and every tear that he has shed. The Master knows, and that is the discovery which gives peace. Everything the aspirant has ever been and done, and all his joys and hopes and fears and falls, are known. Despite the falls, the Master comes to welcome him, and the full knowledge shining in His eyes brings perfect peace, evokes the utmost trust.

Happy is that disciple-to-be who perceives his Master's knowledge of himself and trusts Him from the very first. Unhappy are those who, having journeyed thus far, find doubt both tempter and destroyer of their peace. Abandonment of the upward Way exists potentially for them. Knowing this, the Master's strong, sure hand clasps that of the lonely wanderer. The voice, earlier heard in dreams, now speaks. Vibrant in his ear, music to his heart, the Master's voice welcomes and encourages him.

This meeting between Teacher and neophyte was fore-ordained and marks an epoch in his life as aspirant. It is the fulfilment of a desire long cherished, of a hope long held—to meet the Master face to face, to know and to be known by Him. The experience comes to all who ardently aspire and who will prepare and wisely plan their Quest, founding their hopes on inward strength, on stable character and on unconquerable and inexhaustible love for all their fellow men and every living thing; for thus the Master loves and like draws like to the predestined meeting place.

Together now, both look back upon the road behind. The Master shows the meaning, the message and the cause of each experience, and understanding of the mysterious laws of life deepens. They look forward, the Master pointing out the stages of the Way, the tests and the difficulties, and how they may be overcome. They also look inwards into the disciple's Soul, appraising powers and weaknesses and planning the progresss which must be made.

Thus the disciple comes to know himself; to understand his past and to foresee his future and his goal. Gone, now, are all doubt and questioning. Standing by the Master's side, hearing His voice, inwardly illumined by His Presence and His Power, the disciple knows with utter certainty that this is his Way and that none other can ever call him any more.

Far below yet clearly visible, discordant with the market cries of men proclaiming mentally and physically the value of their wares, their prices and the other payments they demand, the fretful world is seen and heard. Gazing into his Master's eyes, the disciple knows that his work lies in the world. In his turn he must now become the guide of other questing Souls.

Amidst the discord many harmonies are heard. Brave men and women fight the evils from which the discord comes. Awakening Souls await the opening of the doors, the coming of their Spiritual Guides. " None must ever wait or call in vain ", the Master says. " Be thou their guide as one has guided you."

Blest communion, deepest intimacy in perfect understanding—such is the companionship between disciple and Adept *Guru.*[1] No shadows ever wholly dim its light, for even if the pupil fails the Master will not withdraw His love nor fail to point towards the upward Way. " No mistake is final ", He says, " no error irredeemable. Atone, therefore, and make of this fall a stepping stone to greater wisdom and fewer faults. Each fault remedied leads to faultlessness, which is the goal."

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[1] *Guru. Sanskrit.* Spiritual Teacher.

## CHAPTER VIII

# THE PATH AND THE GOAL

SERENE within, however tired and tried without, the pilgrim Soul pursues the next phase of his journey. Steeper, rockier now he finds the Way. Pitfalls threaten him, generating watchfulness. Traps endanger him, developing wariness and caution. Thus his feet become more firmly set upon the Path, wisdom deepening with each success.

Ever the Master watches, ever and anon appears to bring new tasks and to give counsel, warning and encouragement, for the disciple is deeply loved by his *Guru*.

The comradeship is enjoyed of other pupils of the same Teacher, and also of the pupils of other Masters and other Schools. All are filled with like desire—to conquer self and serve the world.

Vision awakes. The flesh loses power. The body, as a tomb, is opened, the sealed "stone" rolling away.[1] *Yoga*[2] frees the Soul. The disciple begins to

[1] A reference to the resurrection of Christ, when the stone is said to have rolled away from the sepulchre (*Lk*. XXIV: 2) here regarded as descriptive of a mystical experience. *q. v. Lecture Notes of the School of the Wisdom*, Vol. II, p. 352, Geoffrey Hodson.

[2] *Yoga*. *Sanskrit*. Union. The science and the practice by which union with God is realised.

know first-hand and to obey the basic laws of life. He discerns the Powers and the Intelligences by which the ordered emanation and "perfection" of the Universe and all that it contains continually occur. He is a man now, full grown, able to stand erect and unafraid before Nature's mightiest Powers and Intelligences, understanding them. Power descends from Monadic heights enlightening and strengthening him, and thus his Path is trod. The pilgrim nears his goal.

The final test awaits him still. Unconsciously he has been preparing for, and even passing it, for many lives. Now it must be faced and final victory gained. It is the test of uttermost selflessness, of the last surrender of the sense of being a separated self. The thought that I-am-I has been inherent in his very Soul throughout long ages. The sense of I-am-ness is imprinted almost indelibly upon the very atoms of his vehicles. Engraved upon the tablets of his mind, sculptured upon his nerves and brain, inherited from countless ancestors, is the knowledge, I-am-I. That deep-rooted sense of I-am-ness is not to be dispelled with a gesture of the Will and mind. The well-nigh ineradicable conviction can only be erased by lives of patient mental effort and selfless living

Each experience upon the Path has aided him. All visions of a wider life, and every realisation of the unity of all, broaden and expand his consciousness. The tragedies of loss upon loss of all he held most dear, the stripping of his Soul of all external power and circumstance, the progressive denudation through which he has passed—all these serve to reduce the power of the habitual thought of separated self-existence.

When, therefore, the final test is made, he is in part prepared, but not wholly so, since the impress of the thought of having been created distinct and separate from every other being on earth remains deep within his Inner Self. Now must that inmost core of self-ness disappear, be burnt out, uprooted, banished to return no more. Therefore the fiery ordeal begins, at the end of which self will have vanished, self-less-ness alone remain. One by one external aids fall away. Friend after friend dies to him, or seems to fail. Establishments, Causes, Movements from which, in furthering them, he received support, now sustain him no more.

Inwardly, the sense of isolated solitude deepens. No guide or friend remains. Even the Adept *Guru*, hitherto the One unfailing Friend, cannot aid him now. The Soul must stand alone, a cosmic speck in cosmic loneliness. The knowledge is then born that there is no aid outside himself, no God to Whom to turn and pray, no Master from Whom power may be drawn. Nought in the wide expanse of emptiness exists save that which he still thinks of as himself. It is an agony which cannot be described, compounded as it is of fear, mounting to terror, to be thus so utterly alone, of pain at what appears to be a cowardly betrayal by all to whom he gave his trust, and of heartbreak at the loss of love, since none seem to remain on whom to turn that love.

Ice-cold in an ice-cold Universe, he turns perforce within to that which hitherto he thought himself, and then at last he finds that there is no separated self, but only the One Great Self of All. Wonderingly, his anguish half forgot, he explores the new experience, enters gradually the state of utter selflessness. Paradoxes cannot enter here; for they are based on separateness and now he is in the presence of the One Alone. Deeper he explores, and finds that Oneness is enfolding him. His ancient self-full-ness expands immeasurably. It seems to him that he himself stretches out into the innumerable modes of the manifestation of the One.

Eventually the remaining film of separateness can stretch no more, and in dazzling light it bursts. The separated self is gone; only the One Self remains and with that One he is now identified. The storm then passes. All fear forever dies away. Loneliness and sorrow at another's act towards himself can touch him never more. He is that other and all others, and all others are himself. "Unity", he cries, "identity", he chants, "that is the truth, this is the goal." The darkness and the emptiness have gone. They had no real existence save as states of consciousness born of the delusion of self-separateness. When that

*Maya*[1] dissolves, light and fullness displace darkness and emptiness.

The mountain top, pure white as of eternal snow, is now reached. Victory is gained in final mastery founded not on self, but upon the inexhaustible and infinite power of the All-One which is One-All. Self-crowned by his own victory, the traveller has reached the goal and has won the prize. Immortal life is his, for now he is identified with the One Immortal Life. Thus the Adept attains, thus every Adept has attained, thus one day will every separated Self be reabsorbed in full consciousness back into THAT in which no separateness can exist.

Such is the Path ahead of every one who seeks, finds and essays to tread the upward Way. Each one who achieves makes the Path easier for others. Many have achieved, breasting the strongest waves, climbing the steepest mountain sides, enduring steadfastly the greatest strain and pain. The Way is easier now for all because of Those Who have attained.

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[1] *Maya. Sanskrit.* Illusion.

## CHAPTER IX

# THE FIRST INITIATION

When the Master considers His disciple sufficiently advanced to be able to pass through Initiatory tests, He presents him or her to the assembled Adepts and Initiates of this planet. A gathering is convened, including especially those Adepts and Initiates with Whom the candidate has *karmic* bonds or in Whose fields of activity he has laboured and will later serve. This gathering is nearly always superphysical. The chosen place is generally one oft-used for such occasions and to it the convocation comes, travelling there in superphysical vehicles of consciousness.

When the ceremony is wholly superphysical the body of the candidate is fast asleep, physical *karma* having provided that essential, itself part of the test of readiness for further progress from the *karmic* point of view; for a man's circumstances and his reactions thereto mirror the state of his consciousness, the degree of his evolutionary development and the state of his *karmic* account. Circumstance is man's surest guide in these matters and is a major, purely physical factor in occult advancement. Environment, condition and opportunity have been earned under law and that is why they so faithfully reveal a man's interior condition and his relationship with Nature and his fellowmen. Even so small a circumstance as privacy and sleep at the appointed time may loom large as a revelation of preparedness, and upon such, therefore, the Adept Master must wait. True, in exceptional cases such as special gatherings of the Adept Brotherhood, unique occult occasions, a particular office to be filled or work to be done, circumstances are moulded by the Adept, but even this possibility has been earned and is within the disciple's *karma*.

When the true time of Initiation arrives all circumstances point thereto, all forces and influences converge upon that moment and event. The Zodiacal and planetary configurations, both at the disciple's birth and at the Initiatory hour, indicate the potentiality and actuality of readiness for the Rite. The very incidents of contact with Initiates and an Adept are expressive both of Nature's unhurried labours within and upon the human Soul and of that Soul's favourable response thereto. Naught occurs by chance, either in realms temporal or spiritual. All is first foreshadowed as latent potentiality, which has been gradually awakened and developed and in due time, hastened by occult stimulus and training, reaches the desired state.

Nature carefully times her major activities and achievements. In the human kingdom she makes allowance with unfailing care for laggards and for those in advance of the Race, providing perfectly for the needs and the rights of both of them. So it is Nature who is at once the Mother of her new-born "son", director of the Adept Teacher and indicator of preparedness to the initiating Hierophant and His Brethren. As Isis [1] she receives the aspirant, dead to the illusions of the outer world, alive to the realities of the inner realms. As Maat [2] she welcomes and assesses him. As Hathor [3], she adopts and "suckles" him, as a child newborn of her, with the milk of *pranic* [4] life and light from worlds invisible. With these the new Initiate is nourished and sustained within those worlds, which will now receive him and must be subdued by him. Wisdom is the milk of the mind, intuition the food of the brain, with which by the Goddess Nature the new-born Initiate is favoured and endowed. Nature, therefore, must assent before the long preparations can begin and the great Ceremony be performed. Both the Master and the Initiator look to Nature for confirmation of their judgment that the seed of

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[1] *Isis.* Egyptian Goddess personifying Nature and the secret Wisdom.

[2] *Maat.* Egyptian Goddess personifying Order.

[3] *Hathor.* Egyptian Goddess personifying Material Substance and the feminine Principle in Nature.

[4] *Prana. Sanskrit.* Vital force.

Adeptship exists and is germinate within the aspirant's Soul.

The Monad fructifies that seed, is the Archangelic procreator and annunciant.[1] At the disciple's acceptance the flashing power of the Monad flamed down in response to an invocation by the Master. The seed sprouted within the substance of the Spiritual Soul, the " womb " of Light which is the *Augoiedes*[2] of the Greeks. In the sunshine and sun-power of His Adeptship, the Master has aided with matchless skill the young plant developing within the Higher Self. The roots have struck strongly down into the soil of the mind, the heart and the bodily life, drawing therefrom needed sustenance; for the Adept is in part the product of idealism and of effort made by the outer man through many lives.

At last the life of lives begins, that incarnation in which the first Great Step from man to Superman will be taken. Active idealism and intensity of effort indicate the awakened condition of the Higher Self and its power to influence increasingly the lower man. Deep psychological experiences, expressive of the labours of a spiritual birth, and the transference of consciousness from the concrete to the abstract intellect, and from the self-centred to the selfless attitude of mind, bring both suffering and joy, and from these parents of wisdom the Initiate is born. Nature has laboured mightily to bring him forth. His Master has skilfully hastened and assisted the interior unfoldment. The Monad has sent down its fiery power to inspire, encourage and sustain throughout the great endeavour.

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[1] A reference to the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, here regarded as a mystical experience, *q.v. Lecture Notes of the School of the Wisdom*, Vol. II, pp. 317 and 318, Geoffrey Hodson.

[2] *Augoiedes. Greek.* The self-radiant, divine fragment, the Ego in the Causal Body.

An Adept from the higher ranks in the Occult Hierarchy is chosen to preside. Under Him a Lodge is "formed", "tyled" and "opened", according to ancient custom. Two Masters with Whom the candidate has been closely associated in his former lives and in his present life, and with Whom there are affinities of Ray and future destiny, present the disciple to the Initiator and the assembled Brethren.

The Adept Brotherhood, rejoicing at the promise of recruitment to its Ranks, assembles to protect as calyx the newly-opening bud. The One Initiator[1] on this earth calls down the concentrated fire of the Solar Lord into the heart of the slowly opening flower. With kingly mien and words of power the Adept Hierophant brings that power down from the Spiritual Sun, to enfire the Inner Self and break the enclosing membrane which hitherto has held the bud within. The individualised Self, with its sense of separated existence born long ago, at

[1] The One Initiator. The Loftiest Being upon Earth, its Spiritual King, the August Head of the Hierarchy of Earth's Adepts, the Lord of the World. *Vide The Secret Doctrine*, references from Index, H. P. Blavatsky, T. P. H., Adyar, Madras.

entrance into self-conscious manhood, from the instinct and habits of the animal, must now be renounced, must now die. Self-centredness is abjured for evermore by the Initiated Higher Self. Self-unity with the larger Self of the Universe, the Deity, is then attained, and when all signs have shown preparedness the Initiator performs by Solar power that final Initiatory act from which the old Adam dies and the Christ within is born.

Visible in degree according to the observer's rank, a pillar of fire extends from the earthly spot whereat the Ceremony occurs to the Sun shining in full splendour above "in the midst of the heavens".[1] The candidate is included and enveiled within the pillar at its lower end. Above, the Initiated Higher Self shines radiantly with new-found solar rays and concentric spheres of solar light. At the summit the Monad, flashing and flaming as a silver star within the glory of the Spiritual Sun, is temporarily united as three in one and one in three with both the Ego and the personality of the candidate. Far below the sleeping form, guarded by the Angelic Hosts, receives the consecrating power and according to the law of correspondences[2] is quickened in its several parts to a new responsiveness to wisdom, love and higher intellect.

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[1] A reference to the action of Joshua when he caused the sun to stand still, here regarded as descriptive of an interior spiritual attainment. (*Joshua* X: 12 and 13).

[2] *The Law of Correspondences.* The law under which mutually resonant parts of the physical and superphysical bodies of men and of the Universe interact systematically. *Vide The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. V, H. P. Blavatsky, Adyar Edition.

The night moves on, the hours pass unnoticed by the Higher Self steeped in bliss, lost in light, exalted in enlightenment. At last, all tests passed, the Sacred Rite is completed, the spiritual knighthood won and the benediction shared with all that lives. Archangels chant the glories of that hour and the future splendour of that day when man newborn shall become man mature, and Adeptship be attained.

The Hierophant withdraws, presentations to the Members of the Brotherhood are made, congratulations are received, and sometimes plans for future work are made. When morning comes the Soul returns to awaken its sleeping physical form, and gradually to convey thereto the fruitage of the night's experience.

## CHAPTER X

# THE INITIATE LIFE

THE chief effect upon consciousness of passage through the First Initiation in the Greater Mysteries consists of the awakening into activity and quickened development of that principle of man in which the faculty of direct spiritual perception resides. The level of consciousness is entered by the Initiated Higher Self at which the duality of knower and known begins to be transcended and the unity of both to be perceived. This is the new power which Initiation bestows—to realise unity and to perceive and know from within instead of, as heretofore, from without. The object is known from within itself, the position of the observer being no longer exterior alone. External observation through the human principle of mind is supplemented by direct knowledge from within, through the principle of intuition.

Unity with the One Self of All, and with all other Selves, is realised consciously during the Initiatory process. The principle and the faculty of intuition are awake and perceptive. The Initiate enjoys full self-conscious realisation of his inalienable and inseparable unity with every being and thing within the range of his perception. " I know that I am one with all ", describes the condition of this consciousness. Consciously one with all, he knows all from within.

The vantage point from which this knowledge is gained is the indwelling Life and consciousness of every object of study. Unified therewith, he knows the object in its essential and inner nature. He sees it from without and intuitively feels with it from within. His knowledge, therefore, is both deep and swiftly gained; for he now begins to be a true seer, able to pierce outer form and know the Life within. Far or near, high or low, everything that comes within the range of his awareness—extended now beyond that of pre-Initiate man—is perceived in wholeness instead of in part as heretofore. To the extended and heightened consciousness of Initiated man, Spirit and matter, Life and form, are now known to be one.

The effect of this experience upon the outer man is to simplify his ideas. Diversity of desires, variety of concepts, multiplicity of interests, are all gradually reduced, and this process culminates in singleness of mind and purpose. Discontentment with form disappears in contentment with life. Satiation with facts gives place to satisfaction with principles. He is, in consequence, sometimes regarded as a simpleton by the worldly wise. He is, however, known as simplified by the spiritually wise. The symbol for this blessed state of Oneness and simplification has ever been the babe, and the Initiation which produces it is allegorically described as a Nativity. The Initiate is a child, in that he is imbued with the same singleness of purpose as is the child newborn—namely, to live. But whereas the infant's will is to satisfy its hunger with food by absorption from without, the Initiate's Will is to satisfy the hunger for fuller realisation of his oneness with the infinite Life of the Universe, in the midst of which he now consciously exists. Life, therefore, is still the goal, more Life the pressing need; no longer to be absorbed from without alone, but to be more deeply penetrated and realised from within.

The deeps, rather than the heights, now call to him as he sinks consciously and deliberately towards the Centre and Source of existence which, paradoxically to the mind, is both within himself and within all other beings and things. The Initiate has thus begun consciously to follow the way home to that primordial fountain which is the Source of all Life and all being.

This Quest abstracts a portion of his higher consciousness from the concerns of worldly life. Disinterestedness with materials other than those he must immediately use displaces the avid search for possessions which once so occupied him. He therefore becomes increasingly otherworldly, his search being no longer for multiplicity of things but for ever-increasing realisation of the fullness of Life. These changes occur gradually, as the lower man reproduces on earth the spiritual preoccupations of the Higher Self in its new found Heaven of boundless Life.

What is this Life in all which is now the chief environment of the Initiated Higher Self? It is the very Soul of all Souls, the ensouling Principle of the Universe, the indwelling vital fluid by which all Creation lives. It is homogeneous, yet atomic. It is omnipresent and all-penetrating, but granular. It is all-pervading, but locally concentrated as the germ in pre-Initiate man, as the active Principle of awareness after Initiation, and as the mastered vehicle of consciousness in the Adept, bestowing upon Him omniscience and omnipresence.

Microcosmic spiritual suns, each a reproduction of the Macrocosmic Source of Life, constitute the atoms of the world of Universal Life into which the Initiate is newborn in consciousness. This ocean, in the depths of which he finds himself, glows and gleams as with the light of myriads of suns, golden-hued. A pulse becomes gradually discernible within this universal, omnipresent heart as that still higher Principle, for which it is a vehicle, rhythmically ebbs and flows. Each atom is a heart in miniature through which, in regular and unbroken tide, the conscious, fiery, electric Force which is the *substans* of the Universe forever flows. This inner fire of God is not gold in colour, but white; it is the Alkahest [1] and the Kether [2] by and of which all things are created and transformed.

Primordial Will to manifest uses Primordial Wisdom as vehicle and instrument, and is linked thereby with Universal Mind. This is the Trinity in action, the Three in One by which all things are made, vitally sustained and consciously evolved. This is the Threefold Deity into Whose Presence the Initiate is lifted up or " born ".

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[1] *Aikahest. Arabic.* The universal solvent in alchemy. Mystically, that power of the Higher Self of man, union with which transmutes the baser human qualities into their spiritual opposites, removes the seeds of disease, renews youth and prolongs life.

[2] *Kether. Hebrew.* The Crown. The first Sephira of the Kabalistic Tree of Life from which the other Nine are emanated. *Vide The Kingdom of the Gods*, Geoffrey Hodson, T.P.H., Adyar.

## CHAPTER XI

# DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS ON THE PATH

THE entrance of the "newborn" upon the Initiate life places before him many problems, both external and interior. Many readjustments are demanded of him, as he gradually learns to live as one who knows the unity of Life and of all living things. Self-identification with that Life occurred for a brief time during the Initiatory Rite, but cannot at first be sustained. The memory of the experience influences him, however, and the fact of unity flashes forth from within his mind with increasing frequency. On these occasions he experiences identity with parts of Nature, such as minerals, flowers and trees, with lives of animals and birds, and with his fellowmen. The germ of omnipresence has been fructified and rapidly develops, producing experiences of unity as it grows.

This calls for readjustments in his relationships with other men. Their spiritual welfare becomes his chief concern and all friendship has behind it the motive to help, and never to hinder, them on their upward way. This applies to all men, the simple and the intellectual, the humble and the great, for all are seen and known by him as fellow pilgrims treading the pathway to perfection. His so-called enemies—and their numbers may for a time increase—are no more resented, nor are they counter-attacked. To do so would be to attack himself and all else that lives. Non-resistance to evil directed at himself, strong defence of others who are attacked—these become the principles which guide his life. He curbs combativeness and checks the hasty, self-defensive word. Habits of mind and speech and act which express separateness must be overridden and overcome.

Slowly and surely, unity in thought and word and deed dominates and marks his character and self-expression. This produces quietude, an inward poise which must be held. He lives increasingly as one who had entered a silent world, a realm of thought and being where all is still. Therein he seeks to live increasingly, self-sustained and in a great peace. Even amidst the storms of life and the conflict and the suffering inseparable from the rapid liquidation of his *karmic* debts, a part of him remains tranquil in higher realms of consciousness, unmoved by those ripples which are the mighty-seeming waves of lower worlds. He becomes stable as a rock amidst such storms, immovable because rooted at last in the Centre which is the infinite Source of his own being, as of the being of all that exists. Thus the Initiate grows, unfolds his powers, meets his tests, pay his debts and establishes himself in the Initiate attitude to life and being.

Deep within his Higher Self, throughout all this time of spiritual adolescence, other powers have germinated and commenced to grow. Under the constant stimulus of the Initiatory power established within him, the Higher Self develops and the Will and the intellect grow stronger and deeper. This power of the One Initiator consists of *Atmic* Fire, and was brought to bear upon him at the touch of the thyrsus or rod of power. Thereafter it operates ceaselessly as an added interior stimulus, arousing from latency to potency the germs of every faculty, as also the particular powers of his Ray. A current of white, fiery, electrical force was brought down from Solar heights into his head and heart. Ceaselessly, thereafter, it plays into him as an arousing, spiritually stimulating agency. This current also empowers him personally, giving to every thought and word and deed a potency, and therefore a responsibility, not usually present to the same extent in pre-Initiate phases of evolution.

This is the *Atma* of the Solar Logos with Whom, through the mediation of the intermediate Logoi—the Lord of the World and the Adept Hierophant—the Ego of the Initiate is for the first time directly linked in consciousness and power. This descent and this more conscious unity with the Central

Source mightily quicken the evolving Higher Self, stimulate tremendously all natural evolutionary processes and, as long as the lower self can intelligently respond, greatly hasten progress towards Adeptship.

Strain is therefore inseparable from the Initiate life. Ceaseless pressure is applied from within to both Higher and lower selves. Unity with all other lives awakens a deepening sense of responsibility for them. The weight of the heavy, adverse *karma* of the whole world is felt as a burden upon his own shoulders, an inescapable sorrow in his heart. He inevitably becomes a man of sorrows; for to the sorrows of mankind, which he shares, are added those he himself endures as his *karma* is forcibly precipitated and harmonised.

Within, however, he is supported by knowledge of a larger life, a growing strength and an oft-recurring ecstasy, as his inner consciousness expands and realises unity with Life itself and attunement with Divinity. Mental powers are expanded and increased. Comprehension of much that heretofore was incomprehensible is often swift and sure. Higher mind and lower mind are merged and the latter, in consequence, is illumined with occult lore acquired in past lives and with knowledge of basic principles. The former Selves of earlier lives share with the present man their knowledge and their power. Vision and memory restore to him the fruits of past experiences ever stored within the higher mind, but now consciously received by the lower mind and the brain.

The view of life and the direction of action in this phase become increasingly intellectual, and therein a danger lies. Mind is indeed the slayer of the Real,[1] and even an Initiate is not safe from the operation upon him of this law. Egotism, conceit and pride of attainment threaten the pure simplicity and self-lessness of the "newborn". He must be on guard lest they introduce that impurity which is the taint of Self: Sometimes he feels God-like as the Solar power pours down into and through him. His mental powers seem most brilliant as intellect expands under its stimulus. "Beware of pride", say his seniors, observing his growing power and confidence and therefore warning him.

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[1] The Real. The eternal and unchanging in contradistinction to the temporal and the evanescent. Intuitive perception of the former can be "slain" (inhibited) by over-accentuation of the analytical and separative attributes of the formal mind. Hence the occult aphorism: "The mind is the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the slayer."

## CHAPTER XII

# THE SECOND AND THIRD INITIATIONS

The dangers of egoism and pride averted, at least temporarily, and pure humility still marking his thought and life, the Initiate is again presented before an Assembly of Adepts. A second and far higher Initiatory Rite is then performed, a loftier grade in the Greater Mysteries is entered. Through the channels opened at the First Initiation, and gradually widened ever since, a still deeper penetration into the boundless ocean of the One Eternal Life is achieved and a far greater measure of Solar power is brought to bear on him.

This time the innermost layers of the human intellect are touched and stirred. The depths of the mind, dark hitherto because unstirring, are touched by the fiery power and set vibrating in harmony with the Solar Mind. Mental quickening now is intense. The spark of mind glows and bursts into flame. All comprehension, and even all knowledge, seem to him now to be his.

If scientist by Ray, discoveries are made of the occult character of the structure of matter and of the Universe. If philosopher, full comprehension is attained of the Universal Ideation by which all things are shaped and formed and of the Archetypes upon which all forms are modelled. The whole mind, composed of Higher and lower intellect now unified, marvellously expands and, if a student by temperament, the Initiate of the Second Grade grows greatly in understanding and in knowledge.

The danger which besets him at this time also grows. He must be more than ever on his guard, lest the Demon Pride leads him into a wilderness of excessive egotism, cold mentality and self-separateness, and there successfully tempts him. Failure comes to many aspirants at this stage. In their personalities they may fall back, even for several lives, into pre-Initiate selfishness and separateness. Even so, unless they utterly forswear the Path and denounce as enemies those who hitherto had aided them, and so erect a barrier between themselves and the Sanctuary, the inward Power is continuously at work in them and eventually brings them through the depths and bears them on to still greater attainments.

Work is one of the great safeguards against final severance from the Mysteries. Labour for a noble Cause, especially the betterment of the lot of man, will serve as bridge which can be crossed from a phase of intellectual pride to one of spiritual vision and humility. New heights are then climbed. New vision is gained. Spiritual exaltation occurs and spiritual truth is realised.

Now the Path leads upwards by steeper ways to greater heights. The transformation of the lower man into the likeness of the Higher must be brought about. The very flesh must be made subservient to the Spirit. In preparation for the later descent of the Monadic fire when the goal of Adeptship shall be attained, the light of the Immortal Self must shine through the mortal body. A period of retirement and retreat is generally granted to the pilgrim, whose intellect is exalted into the presence of that Wisdom which is embodied in all Creation.

The vast ocean of eternal Life which first was entered at the spiritual birth has been deeply explored, and now that Being Whose vehicle it is draws the ascending pilgrim into His[1] Presence. He then sees direct that the waters of Eternal Life are imbued with consciousness. Intelligence pervades and dwells at rest within that boundless Sea. The omnipresent Life of God is vehicle for His Omniscience, and into the Presence of the Omniscient Deity the pilgrim is now drawn.

The splendour and the calm power of that Mighty One, Who is the Agent and Embodiment of the One Universal Mind, the Demiurge incarnate within the ensouling Life of the Universe, are awe-inspiring. An awe-inspiring Figure is seen by the Initiate at this great experience, radiant as a thousand suns, blazing with the splendour of that Eternal Fire and Light with which It is self-crowned.

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[1] The masculine is indicated for convenience only, Deity being a-sexual.

"I am the Real amidst the unreal", then chants the Voice. "I am the Light beyond the darkness, the Immortality to which from death all men arise. Come thou to Me."

Then the Initiate is received into THAT which is the Heart of all Creation, just as disciple he was received into the heart of his Master. Swallowed up within the Heart of Being, absorbed for a time in the very Centre and Source of all Life, his intellect is exalted and his vehicles of consciousness transfigured. At rest at last, he remains therein, a nonentity, a self-less being, free wholly, if but temporarily, from all taint of self. He experiences that exaltation of the intellect which follows the full renunciation by the intellect of I-am-ness; for only then, when self is dead, slain by the former self, can full self-lessness be attained and union with the One Self of All be achieved.

This, in terms of consciousness, is the experience to which the Initiate of the Third degree, the transfigured one, is exalted. Again, he is not alone. Once more the assembled Adepts witness his triumph and assist in his attainment, which is by far the greatest achievement of the Soul since it was first formed.[1]

The temptations and the tests during passage through this stage are almost unendurable, the allurements of worldly power and intellectual eminence almost irresistible. The way to greatness and effective service seems to involve acceptance of man's estimate of his stature. The world calls to him for deliverance by intellectual power. Office, which would make him a leader of men, opens before him; yet acceptance could made of him a slave to the illusion of self-separateness and the tempter Pride. His vision of what is Real and what unreal must be clear at that hour. Intuition must penetrate unfailingly through the glamour of success and see both bait and trap within it. The not-Self must be forsworn for the One Self, the outer for the inner, and the false for the true. The way leads inwards, not outwards. The great journey must be made towards the Centre, and so away from the circumference.

One Office alone is at this time acceptable. It is that selected for him by the Brotherhood of Adepts, to which his life belongs, and is not one chosen for him by the world. Hierophant he may be, whether before men or in Rites closed to the outer world. He may not become a purely worldly leader, outside of and separate from that inner

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[1] *Vide The Causal Body*, A. E. Powell, T.P.H., London. Chapter on Individualisation.

Office and ideal, and still succeed. Hierophantship demands self-negation and self-surrender. Worldly leadership of worldly men can lead to self-fostering, and so defeat. The Judas within man lurks in the shadows at this time, waiting to betray. This is the test which both precedes and follows the Initiation of Transfiguration, and through it every transfigured Initiate has passed triumphantly, to stand amongst his Peers upon that Mount which is the scene of every similar triumph.

The full withdrawal of the consciousness from every semblance of form into the Heart of Life then occurs. The Initiate is received by Life, is acknowledged by Life, and is crowned by that Deific Power for which Eternal Life is the unresisting and all-pervading vehicle. Never again need form delude and capture him, even though he must return to life in form; for now he knows the One Eternal Life and has been made one with THAT which abides therein, the Life-embodied Universal Mind.

## CHAPTER XIII

# THE FOURTH AND FIFTH INITIATIONS

THE last ordeal leading to the final triumph must now be endured. Transfigured on high, the Initiate of the Third Degree voluntarily descends to the depths. The world of men must receive him, if for the last time. Debts outstanding to nations and to individuals must be paid. Nature will exact to the uttermost the full payment of every debt incurred. All pain inflicted throughout the long series of his lives and as yet not healed by him must now be healed.

The balance still weighs heavily against him. Throughout his seven hundred human lives or more he has grievously transgressed the law of brotherhood, injuring individuals, groups and multitudes. All that he exacted must by now have been repaid. All that he wounded and has not healed must now wound him, that full payment may be made and perfect balance be achieved. Therefore he must voluntarily descend from those spiritual heights whereon he was transfigured into the world of men, wherein he will appear to be debased. Not yet for him ultimate absorption into THAT with which temporarily he was at one. Not yet his final deliverance from humanity and all its woes.

Nevertheless, the memory of the heights is with him. The power of the Monad sustains him and the unfailing support of that Life wherein he seeks one day to disappear is now assured to him, even though the passion of suffering associated with the Fourth Initiation may temporarily deprive him of the knowledge. He steps forward towards his goal and into that cruellest of all tribunals, the false judgment of mankind. He is not yet Adept and so has weaknesses. He is not yet free from indebtedness and so is vulnerable. He is yet man and so displays humanity. His honour is assailed. His regal bearing provokes the scorn of lesser men and his purity of life is made a subject of mockery.

If he possesses occult powers wherewith to defend himself, he may not use them now. Supernormal powers may only be used for the work of the Brotherhood and the helping of certain men, never for self. Hence he is powerless and defenceless, although in truth a man of power and potent to defend. This must be so, since absolute selflessness is his goal.

Soon the cruel blows begin to fall on him. Soon the multitude spit upon him and demand his death in ignominy. Soon, therefore, a darkness closes over him, pain blinds him, agony benumbs his brain, so that for a time his spiritual vision is lost and he believes himself utterly alone. His inner, invincible Will alone remains throughout that dread ordeal, the Will which will never yield though all else fail. That Will, born of descending Monadic fire, surges up within him, rises to heights almost fanatical, and so sustains him when all external aid seems gone. He who has been one with Universal Life and Mind now, in his passion, becomes one with Universal Will.

Then he is spiritually crowned. Then the Fourth Great Stage is passed, the Fourth Initiation bestowed, and the inscription written in that book wherein the imperishable record of his life is written. Not over his head that men can see but in Nature's memory, the Akash,[1] is imprinted forever the record of his victory.

Will-crowned, Will-robed, Will-enthroned, the Initiate of the Fourth Degree arises from that Crucifixion, which is but of his human self with its sense of separateness. Now is he drawn into unity with the Universal Will, the power omnipotent which arose within him in his hour of need and sustained him to the end. *Nirvana*, salvation, liberation, awaits him when his last work as man shall have been done, his last lesson learnt, his last power developed, and his last and highest skill attained.

Then, as Initiate of the Fifth Degree, the weapon of His human nature tempered to the utmost and keen-edged, He, the warrior victorious, lays down His arms and enters into peace. The victory which He attained as man is His for evermore. Naught can ever again successfully assail Him. His debts paid, His discharge complete, He is immune from every harm.

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[1] *Akash. Sanskrit.* The subtile, soniferous essence of ether, one property of which is to receive an indelible imprint of every event.

As Adept, self-Initiated at the last, even though He may engage in strife to help the world, He Himself is never more involved in war. He has ascended above the storm, beyond all strife. Serene in ecstasy, He lives at one with the Will and Life and Mind of the Supreme.

The Path by which He now ascends to heights invisible to all save Supermen stretches beyond the gaze of man. That which He has achieved on earth He extends into the Solar System, and ratifies it there. Then beyond, into broader Cosmic realities, the Adept extends His mastery, ascending height on height towards a Cosmic Goal.

Finally He will be lost to manifested worlds, to wait in full Self-consciousness on the threshold of the Unmanifest until that evening hour in the Cosmic Day when, with Him, all shall sink back into the Absolute.

## SOME BOOKS ON THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

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| *Practical Occultism* | H. P. Blavatsky. |
| *The Voice of the Silence* | ,, |
| *Hints to Students of Occultism* | ,, |
| *Light on the Path* | M. C. |
| *The Idyll of the White Lotus* | ,, |
| *The Doctrine of the Heart* | A. Besant. |
| *The Laws of the Spiritual Life* | ,, |
| *The Bhagavad Gita* (Translated) | ,, |
| *At the Feet of the Master* | J. Krishnamurti. |
| *Christ and Buddha*, and all the smaller books | C. Jinarajadasa. |
| *Compilations of Letters from the Masters* | ,, |
| *The Human Interest* | N. Sri Ram. |
| *An Approach to Reality* | ,, |
| *Man: His Origins and Evolution* | ,, |
| *Thoughts for Aspirants* | ,, |
| *The Practice of the Presence of God* | Brother Lawrence. |
| *Spiritual Maxims* | ,, ,, |

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| *Viveka Chudamani* by Shri Shankaracharya (Translated) | M. Chatterji. |
| *The Gospel of the Buddha* | Paul Carus. |
| *The Life of the Lord Buddha* | L. Adams Beck. |
| *Be Ye Perfect* | Geoffrey Hodson. |
| *Thus Have I Heard* | ,, ,, |
| *Destiny* | ,, ,, |
| *Meditations on the Occult Life* | ,, ,, |
| *Occult Powers in Nature and in Man* | ,, ,, |
| *Man's Supersensory and Spiritual Powers* | ,, ,, |
| *Man, the Triune God* | ,, ,, |
| *A Yoga of Light* | ,, ,, |